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THE COAL FIELDS OF MISSOURI.

Interesting Letter from Dr. Jno. H. Britts, of Clinton, to Col. J. L. Pace, of Butler, Missouri.

CLINTON, Mo., March 5, '84.
Col. J. L. Pace, Butler, Mo.

DEAR SIR:—In answer to your inquiry in regard to the amount and value of the coal-fields that would be accessible to a line of railroad direct from Butler, Bates county, to Clinton, Henry county, Missouri, and on in an eastward direction to St. Louis, as compared with other routes spoken of, I have this to say:

That you propound a question very difficult to answer other than in a general way, owing to the limited data at our command, and the fact that the coal-fields of Western Missouri, with very few exceptions, have only been prospected and worked near the line of out-crop of the different veins, or seams, composing with little doubt, a vast coal-deposit extending and becoming deeper in a northwesterly direction, till lost or inaccessible under the upper, barren coal measures, permian and cretaceous formations of Kansas.

Since the projection of the old Osage Valley and Southern Kansas Railway in 1859, which made Cole Camp, Benton county, Clinton, Henry county, Butler, Bates county, Missouri, and Emporia, Kansas, points along its proposed line, I have made the

COAL-FIELDS OF WESTERN MISSOURI, south of the Missouri river, a special study, and have often regretted that that enterprise, begun just before the commencement of the late war, had to be abandoned and the vast coal interest of Western Missouri left, for the time, undeveloped; and I am still more surprised that twenty-five years should have elapsed and interest is just now again being awakened in this direction.

To a person familiar with the geology of Western Missouri and Eastern Kansas, the coal problem presents no very great difficulties. But a few facts must be kept steadily in mind in making estimates of this region—favored in this as in many other respects. To these facts I will briefly call your attention:

First. As to the lay or dip of the country: From any given point in Western Missouri the age of the rocks become more and more recent on the surface as we go in a northwesterly direction; or, in other words, the dip of the strata is to the northwest in a nearly uniform rate of fifteen feet to the mile.

Second. The coal measures of Missouri are composed of three series—the upper, middle and lower, comprising nineteen hundred or two thousand, or more, feet of deposits. (See Mo. Reports 1872, page 6, pt 2d) That the upper series are nearly or entirely barren of workable coal; that the middle series beginning above the Warrensburg sandstone, has some good seams of coal and are of economic value, and are worked at Lexington and many places in Lafayette, Johnson and Cass counties. That the lower coal series, comprising a thickness of strata estimated at 250 feet, contain the thickest and most valuable seams found in the State, some of them six feet or more in thickness, as at Lewis Station and near Windsor, Henry county, and in the vicinity of Rich Hill, Bates county. Other of less thickness, from three to four feet, are valued for cooking and gas purposes, as in many mines now worked near Clinton and Brownington, Henry county.

Third. That the lower coal series is composed of shales and sandstone, easily decomposed or denuded, consequently gives a gently rolling surface with the valleys of the streams near the line of the out-crop, cutting below the different beds, carrying them away.

Fourth. That the whole surface of the country, subsequent to the deposit and partial denudation of the coal formation, was covered with what is known as the drift formation in greater or less thickness.

Fifth. That the strike or line of out-crop of the lower coal series is an irregular line, commencing, say a few miles west of Sedalia, Missouri, thence in a southwesterly direction to a point five miles east of Windsor, Henry county; thence south to a point fifteen miles east of Clinton; thence nearly west to the vicinity of Brownington; thence south to Hoover's coal bank on the Osage river; thence southwest through St. Clair and Vernon counties and further.

Now, keeping the foregoing facts before us, you will readily perceive the value and importance of the coal veins that are now being worked at various points in Bates, Vernon and Henry counties; that so far they are only the out-croppings of the

GREAT BODY OF COAL

that lies deeper and to the northwest the economic value of which depends upon the depth that will be required to reach it. But at any rate I would estimate that the lower veins could be worked at any point within twenty miles of northwest of a given out-crop, besides commanding the seams that would set in and overlie for them.

For a more definite answer to your question, as to the amount and value of coal your proposed line would reach, I will begin with the coal found in the eastern part of Henry county. Here we have the equivalent of the Brownington coal, which will probably prove to be among the lowest found in Missouri, as it immediately overlies the sub-carboniferous. This coal has recently attracted a great deal of attention on account of its very superior quality for gas purposes. That mined within two miles south and east of Clinton, from the banks of Judge Owens, Pitcher, Pitcher, Jordan and others, have been thoroughly tested at Kansas City, Sedalia and Clinton gas-works, and found to yield 4 1-2 cubic feet of excellent gas to the pound, and superior for this purpose to any coal west of Pittsburg, Pa. Your road will pass over ten mile in width of this coal.

West of Clinton you will reach the next seam of coal above, known as the "hydraulic vein," on account of the overlying rock. This coal is a very uniform seam of three or four feet in thickness, of good quality, and is found outcropping along Deepwater and extends well into Bates county. Your line would fully command an unlimited supply of this coal. It is now operated for local use at many points between Clinton and Butler, especially in the western portion of Henry county.

As you are familiar with the coal of Bates, especially in the vicinity of Walnut, I will not speak of it. As near as I can estimate, no coal will be found east of the western portion of Benton county, and none on the Osage east of Hoover's bank, nor any east of Brownington in the direction of Warsaw.

I know of no line that would command a better prospect for coal than the one mentioned; others may be as good, none, I think, better. Nor do I think that a line could be found crossing the coal-fields of Western Missouri, from the east to the west, that could command so many miles of accessible coal on either side, or cross it where the belt would be wider.

Aside from the value of the coal resources, the gentle incline of the surface of the country, the easy grade of your proposed line, will commend it as well as the

SUPERIOR AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES of the route, avoiding the hills and breaks of the Osage river, following a natural divide, till well through Morgan county you encounter the rough country at a point where it is easiest to penetrate and yet near enough for the tributaries of the Osage to furnish abundant material for ties.

Hoping this statement may cause yourself and friends interested to further investigate this route.

I remain very truly yours,

JNO. H. BRITTS.

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CORNER STONES PERPETUATED.

A Disput of Long Standing Resulting in a Four Days Lawsuit.

For a long time there has been a continual dispute regarding the exact correctness of a line between the farms of Messrs Thomas and Snider in Lone Oak township, and had created no little amount of excitement throughout the entire township. The original survey was made by one Josua E. Durand, in 1853 who was County Surveyor at that time and Mr. Tho has claimed that he could still place the corner stones in their proper places, which fact Mr. Snider denied and demanded Mr. Thomas to prove same. It seems that there is a well of water on the edge of Thomas' farm which Snider claims to be right on the line, and claims to have equal right to the well as Thomas. From such a state of affairs things developed into a law suit last week which lasted for four days. W. O. Jackson appeared for Mr. Thomas to establish the perpetuation of the original survey, and Thos. Silvers refuted the argument in behalf of Snider. The case was tried before Justice Harper, of Lone Oak, Squire Brown, of Pleasant Gap and M. L. Wolfe, County Surveyor. A large number of witnesses were introduced, some of which were the oldest citizens of the county, and about 100 pages of legal cap were filled with evidence which were duly recorded.

After a thorough examination trial of four days in length, the corner stones of No. 1, 6, & 7, were proved to be located according to the survey made in 1853, and just at the spots designated by Mr. Thomas.

It will be quite a relief to many of the citizens of Lone Oak, to know that this question is settled as all of them are more or less interested.

The citizens of Uniontown Pa. have petitioned the Postmaster-General to appoint Mrs. Lizzie Nutt, the mother of the boy who killed Dukes, postmistress of the place.

THE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY.

Hold Another Meeting at the Grange Hall in this City.

INTERESTING PAPER READ.

The Bates County Horticultural Society met in regular session at the Grange Hall in this city, last Saturday.

Vice President E. P. Henry occupied the chair. The minutes of last meeting read and approved.

John B. Newberry, President elect sent in his resignation which was accepted.

The President, E. P. Henry, read a paper on the culture and variety of the Peach, which was followed by a general discussion.

A. C. Skinner read a paper on Landscape Gardening, and Henry Speer one on the Variety of Apples Suitable to this climate. The address of Mr. Speer is published elsewhere in to-days TIMES, and that of Mr. Skinner will appear next week.

The following program was reported for the next meeting which is set for the third Saturday in April: Election of President to succeed J. B. Newberry, resigned.

Profits of an Apple orchard, by J. B. Durand.

Training Orchards, by J. B. Innis.

Best method of Conducting Horticultural Societies, by H. B. Francis.

On motion the Secretary was instructed to furnish the proceedings of the meeting to the TIMES, with a request that other papers copy.

Adjourned till April 19th.

Paris ladies are now wearing blue gloves. As soon as the streets become muddy the cable reporter will send over the color of their stockings.

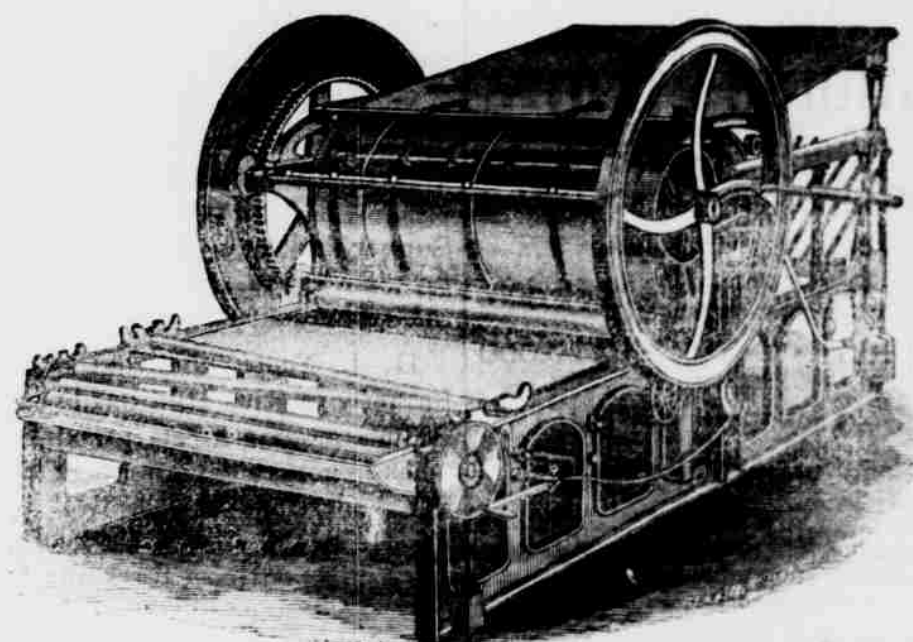
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